

REMARKS

Claims 1, 7 and 27 are amended, Claims 2-6, 8, 10-15 and 28 are cancelled and Claims 29-44 are added. Claims 1, 7, 9, 16-27 and 29-44, as amended, remain subject to examination in the application. No new matter is added by the amendment to the claims.

In the Office Action dated February 17, 2005, The Examiner objected to Claims 6, 7, 9, 21-26 and 28 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but stated that those claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants amended Claim 1 to include the subject matter of cancelled Claim 6 and amended Claim 7 to depend from Claim 1. New Claims 39-42 correspond to allowed Claims 17-20 respectively rewritten to depend from Claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants believe that Claim 1 and dependent Claims 7, 9, 21-26 and 39-42 are allowable.

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's statement of allowance for Claims 16-20.

Applicants amended Claim 27 to include the subject matter of cancelled Claim 28. Accordingly, Applicants believe that independent Claim 27 is allowable.

Applicants added independent Claim 29 which is similar in subject matter to Claim 1 prior to the amendment to include the subject matter of Claim 6. Applicants added Claims 30-34, dependent from Claim 29, which are similar to cancelled Claims 2 and 5-8. Applicants also added new Claims 35-38, dependent from Claim 29, that correspond to allowed Claims 17-20 respectively.

Applicants added independent Claim 43 and dependent Claim 44 which are directed to the embodiments shown in Figs. 2 and 11 wherein the paint injectors are spaced about the washer shroud. However, the paint injectors are not required to either rotate about or move parallel to a longitudinal axis of the shroud washer. As stated on page 8, lines 10-12, of the specification, the bell applicator positions the bell manifold (with the paint receptacle) over the selected paint injector.

The Examiner rejected Claims 1 and 27 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Yoshida et al. The Examiner stated that Yoshida et al. shows an electrostatic painting apparatus comprising a bell applicator 30 having a paint receptacle 22 and being movable to and from a docking position; a paint canister 39 in the bell applicator connected to the paint receptacle; a

000132815/0002/625282-1

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

paint filling station, the bell applicator being movable relative to the filling station; and at least two paint injectors 35a and 35b attached to the filling station, each of the injectors being adapted to be connected to a different color paint, the filling station being actuable to move each of the injectors selectively to the docking position along a docking axis for engagement with the paint receptacle for filling the canister with paint.

The Yoshida et al. patent shows a prior art painting robot that changes colors by replacing a paint cartridge 35 (35a - 35n) in a cavity of the housing 22 of the rotary atomizing head type coating system 21 mounted on the robot 1. The paint is supplied from the paint cartridge 35 to the rotary atomizing head 30 through the feed tube 39 integral with the paint cartridge 35.

New Claim 29 defines "a paint canister connected to said paint receptacle for receiving paint through said paint receptacle". If the Yoshida et al. housing 22 is considered a "paint receptacle" and the feed tube 39 is considered a "paint canister" as suggested by the Examiner, the feed tube 39 (paint canister) is not connected to the housing 22 (paint receptacle) and the feed tube 39 (paint canister) does not receive paint through the housing 22 (paint receptacle) as required by Claim 29.

The Examiner did not identify which component(s) of Yoshida et al. he believes correspond to the "paint filling station" defined by Claim 1. This is important because new Claim 29 recites that the paint injectors are attached to the paint filling station, that the filling station moves each of the paint injectors selectively to the docking position of the paint receptacle, that paint is transferred from an associated paint supply to the paint canister, and that the paint receptacle is disengaged from the paint injector before the paint receptacle is moved from the docking position.

If the paint cartridges 35a and 35b are "paint injectors" as identified by the Examiner, then they are not attached to a "paint filling station" as defined by Claim 29. As shown in Fig. 7 of Yoshida et al., the paint cartridges 35a through 35n are placed or supported on the cartridge holder table 56 where they can be refilled. After filling, the paint cartridge 35a is removed by hand from the table 56 and mounted in the housing 22. As shown in Fig. 9, after spraying, the paint cartridge 35a is removed by hand from the housing 22 and returned to the table 56. At no time are the paint cartridges 35a through 35n attached to the table 56 and the table 56 does not

move the paint cartridges 35a through 35n to the "docking position" of the rotary atomizer head 30 as defined in Claim 29.

Furthermore, new Claim 29 recites that "when said paint receptacle is engaged with one of said paint injectors, paint can be transferred from the associated paint supply to said paint canister through said one of said paint injectors and said paint receptacle, and whereby said paint receptacle is disengaged from said one of said paint injectors before said paint receptacle is moved from the docking position." When the Yoshida et al. rotary atomizer head 30 is in the "docking position" shown in Fig. 7, there is no transfer of paint from an associated paint supply to the feed tube 39 (paint canister) through the housing 22 (paint receptacle) and the housing 22 (paint receptacle) is not disengaged from the paint cartridge 35 (paint injector) before it is moved from the "docking position".

Applicants elected Species 5 (Fig. 19) for prosecution on the merits. New Claim 29 is generic to all of the species. New dependent Claim 30 is directed to Species 1 (Fig. 2) and Species 2 (Fig. 3). New dependent Claim 31 is directed to Species 3 (Fig. 4). New dependent Claims 32 and 33 are directed to Species 5 (Fig. 19). New dependent Claim 34 is directed to Species 4 (Fig. 11).

In view of the amendments to the claims and the above arguments, Applicants believe that the claims of record now define patentable subject matter over the art of record. Accordingly, an early Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.